for exploring and processing graphite in Madhya Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

**Multinational diamond giants**

7512. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government in consultation with the Government of Madhya Pradesh have taken a decision to invite multinational diamond giants to prospect and mine diamonds in the State;

(b) if so, whether the Central Government have taken a decision to drop some of multinational diamond giants;

(c) if so, the details in this regard;

(d) whether public sector companies and private sector in the country have been totally kept out of this diamond mining in the State; and

(e) if so, the reasons and justification therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) to (e) The Madhya Pradesh Government invited applications for prospecting of Diamonds and Alexandrite in South-Eastern part of Raipur District in April, 1994. In response 23 applicants, including some Indian public sector and private sector companies applied. The State Govemment has selected the following applicants for grant of prospecting rights and has sought Central Government's prior approval under Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957:—

(i) M/s. De Beers (India) Prospecting Limited.

(ii) M/s. CR A Exploration (India) Ltd. and

(iii) M/s. Ashton Mining India Private Limited.

Some objections to State Government's above proposal have been received by the Central Government. A write petition has also been filed against State Government's proposal before the Hon'ble High Court, Jabalpur. The Central Government has not taken any view in the matter yet.

**Mining in private sector**

7513. SHRI CHIMANBHAI HARIBHAI SHUKLA:
SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) what are the minerals whose mining is proposed to be entrusted to private sector; and

(b) what are the mineral-wise details of the private sector companies with whom the contracts have been signed or negotiations are going on in this regard together with the names of those companies recommended by State Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) The Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 and the Rules made there under which govern the exploitation of all minerals (excluding fuel and Atomic minerals) do not impose any ban on exploitation of these minerals in the private sector.

(b) As per information available with Indian Bureau of Mines, minerals were being produced from over 3,340 leases in 1993 in both the public and private sector. State Governments grant leases as per provisions of Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act and details of leases under consideration of the State Governments are not readly . available.